Author's Purpose and Text Structure

Grade 3 Reading Worksheet - Challenge Me

Name _____ Date _____

Circle the answer.

READ THIS FIRST

What Makes a Thunderstorm

On a hot summer afternoon, the sky can change fast. Puffy white clouds grow tall and dark. Soon you see a flash and hear a loud boom. What causes a thunderstorm? It starts with warm air and water.

The sun heats the ground on a summer day. The warm ground heats the air just above it. Warm air is lighter than cool air, so it rises. As a result, warm, wet air floats high into the sky.

High above the ground, the air is much colder. The rising air cools down, and the water in it forms tiny drops. Billions of drops together make a cloud. When lots of warm air keeps rising, the cloud grows taller and taller. A storm cloud can grow more than eight miles tall.

Near the top of the cloud, it is so cold that drops freeze into bits of ice. Strong winds toss the ice up and down. The pieces bump and rub against each other. Because of this rubbing, the cloud builds up electric charges. It is a bit like a sock that comes out of the dryer full of static.

When enough charge builds up, it jumps across the sky as lightning. A lightning bolt is hotter than the surface of the sun. It heats the air around it in a split second. The hot air spreads out so fast that it makes a giant boom. That boom is thunder.

You see lightning before you hear thunder. This happens because light travels much faster than sound. Count the seconds between the flash and the boom. If you count five seconds, the storm is about one mile away.

Heavy rain falls when the drops in the cloud grow too heavy to float. Sometimes the ice falls as hail instead. Afterward, the air often feels cooler and fresh.

Thunderstorms can be dangerous, so it is smart to go indoors when you hear thunder. Many people think watching a storm from a safe window is exciting. Now you know the causes behind every flash and boom.

1. What is the author's main purpose for writing this text?
   - to persuade readers to watch storms outside
   - to entertain readers with a story about a storm
   - to compare summer storms with winter storms
   - to explain what causes a thunderstorm

2. Which text structure does the author mostly use?
   description cause and effect compare and contrast problem and solution

3. Which group of words from the text signals this structure?
   - I think, best, should
   - first, second, third
   - so, as a result, because of this
   - same, both, unlike

4. What causes warm air to rise?
   - Rain pushes it off the ground.
   - Lightning heats it up quickly.
   - It is lighter than cool air.
   - The cloud pulls it up high.

5. What causes the boom of thunder?
   Heavy rain hits the roofs very hard.
   Two dark clouds bump into each other.
   Hot air around lightning spreads out fast.
   Pieces of ice crash onto the ground.

6. Why do you see lightning before you hear thunder?
   Sound has to go around the clouds.
   Light travels faster than sound.
   Thunder waits until the rain stops.
   Lightning is closer to you than thunder.

7. Lightning heats the air in a split second. What does a split second mean?
   a very short moment a cold part of the day half of a cloud a long, slow minute

8. Which paragraph tells how to find out how far away a storm is?
   the seventh paragraph the sixth paragraph the fourth paragraph
   the fifth paragraph

9. Which sentence gives the author's own advice to readers?
   Many people think watching a storm from a safe window is exciting.
   Thunderstorms can be dangerous, so it is smart to go indoors when you hear thunder.
   Afterward, the air often feels cooler and fresh.
   A lightning bolt is hotter than the surface of the sun.

10. A reader thinks storms are only scary. What view does the author say many people have?
    Watching from a safe window is exciting.
    Hail is more fun to watch than rain.
    Thunder is the best part of summer.
    Storms are much too loud to enjoy.

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Answer Key - Grade 3 Reading Worksheet - Challenge Me

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